

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 00629 281633Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 IO-13 ACDA-10 OMB-01 SSO-00
NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
/076 W

-----281713Z 089920 /53

O R 281530Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1505
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 0629

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, SY
SUBJECT: JAN 28 SYRIAN MEDIA REPORT ISRAELI THREATS OVER
SOUTH LEBANON

1. SYRIAN MEDIA CONTINUED REPORT TENSION DEVELOPING OVER
SYRIAN MOVES IN SOUTH LEBANON. PRESS HEADLINED : "ADF WILL
IMPLEMENT WITHIN COMING DAYS SECURITY PLAN THROUGHOUT ALL
LEBANESE REGIONS. ISRAELI DECLARATIONS ON DANGER OF PRESENCE
OF ARAB FORCES." BRIEF ARTICLE REPORTED ISRAELI COS GUR'S
STATEMENT THAT, "ISRAEL HAS TAKEN EVERY PRECAUTION REGARDING
SOUTH LEBANON AND ONLY HAS TO MAKE THE NECESSARY DECISIONS."
ARTICLE FURTHER REPORTED THAT "ZIONIST CIRCLES" SAID SITUATION
IN SOUTHERN LEBANON "REMAINS EXTREMELY GRAVE," AND THAT "ISRAEL
LOOKS FORWARD TO WITHDRAWAL OF ALIEN FORCES WHICH HAVE ENTERED
AREA OF NABATIYAH." KNESSET FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN
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PAGE 02 DAMASC 00629 281633Z

YITZHAK NAVON ALSO QUOTED SAYING, "ISRAEL CANNOT ACQUIESCE
TO ENTRY OF SYRIAN FORCES INTO SOUTHERN LEBANON, WHATEVER THE
PRETEXT FOR SUCH ACTIONS."

2. SYRIAN EDITORIALS ALSO DEALT WITH SITUATION IN SOUTH
LEBANON IN GENERALLY SUBDUED MANNER. EDITORIAL IN AL-BAATH
TOOK NOTE OF SPATE OF ISRAELI WARNINGS CONCERNING ARAB FORCES

IN SOUTH LEBANON AND ACCUSED ISRAEL OF INVOKING HER SECURITY REQUIREMENTS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN ATMOSPHERE OF TENSION AND INSTABILITY IN SOUTH LEBANON. EDITORIAL DECRIED ISRAELI APPEALS TO WESTERN OPINION OVER HER SECURITY WHEN "WORLD KNOWS IT IS ISRAEL WHICH IS THREATENING ARAB SECURITY, OCCUPYING TERRITORY, AND IGNORING RIGHTS OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE." EDITORIAL ASKED, "WILL ISRAEL USE ISSUE OF PRESENCE OF ARAB FORCES IN SOUTHERN LEBANON AS EXCUSE FOR CREATING TENSION IN AREA DURING PERIOD OF INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS?" EDITORIAL CLAIMED THIS PROBABLY ISRAEL'S INTENTION AND ASSERTED THAT RESTORING SECURITY TO LEBANON WAS "INTERNAL ARAB ISSUE."

3. TISHRIIN EDITORIAL RAISED SPECTER OF ISRAELI AMBITIONS TO SEIZE SOUTH LEBANON AND USE WATERS OF LITANI RIVER. EDITORIAL CALLED CONCEPT OF RED LINE UNACCEPTABLE AND ASSERTED THAT ONLY LEBANESE AUTHORITIES HAVE "RIGHT TO DETERMINE WHO ENTITLED TO BE PRESENT IN THE SOUTH."

4. 1415L RADIO DAMASCUS BROADCAST MADE NO MENTION OF SOUTH LEBANON OR ISRAELI THREATS.

5. COMMENT: OVERALL COVERAGE OF EVENTS IN SOUTH WAS RESTRAINED AS MEDIA AVOIDED MAKING ANY DIRECT THREATS TO ISRAEL. THRUST OF ARTICLES, HOWEVER, IMPLIED THAT DEPLOYMENTS OF ADF FORCES INTO ALL AREAS OF LEBANON TO ASSERT CENTRAL GOVERNMENT CONTROL WOULD CONTINUE.

MURPHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TROOP DEPLOYMENT, NEWS MEDIA COMMENTS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 28-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977DAMASC00629
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770031-0815
Format: TEL
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977019/aaaaahwk.tel
Line Count: 89
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d98e84de-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Jul-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3679491
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JAN 28 SYRIAN MEDIA REPORT ISRAELI THREATS OVER SOUTH LEBANON
TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE, IS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d98e84de-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009